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ABSTRACT

Part 1 of this report contains the results of a national survey of Catholic diocesan directors of religious education. Areas covered by the survey include: background information, salary and benefits, directors' responsibilities, directors' views on future issues in religious education, opinions on accomplishments of the past twenty years, and perceptions on effectiveness. Part 2 of the report contains a model job description and qualification requirements for the position of diocesan director. (DB)

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NATIONAL PROFILE OF DIOCESAN DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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**Catechesis: Sharing
the Light of Faith
with Persons of All Ages
and Backgrounds**

Joseph P. Sinwell

Thomas P. Walters,
Ph.D.

Rita T. Walters



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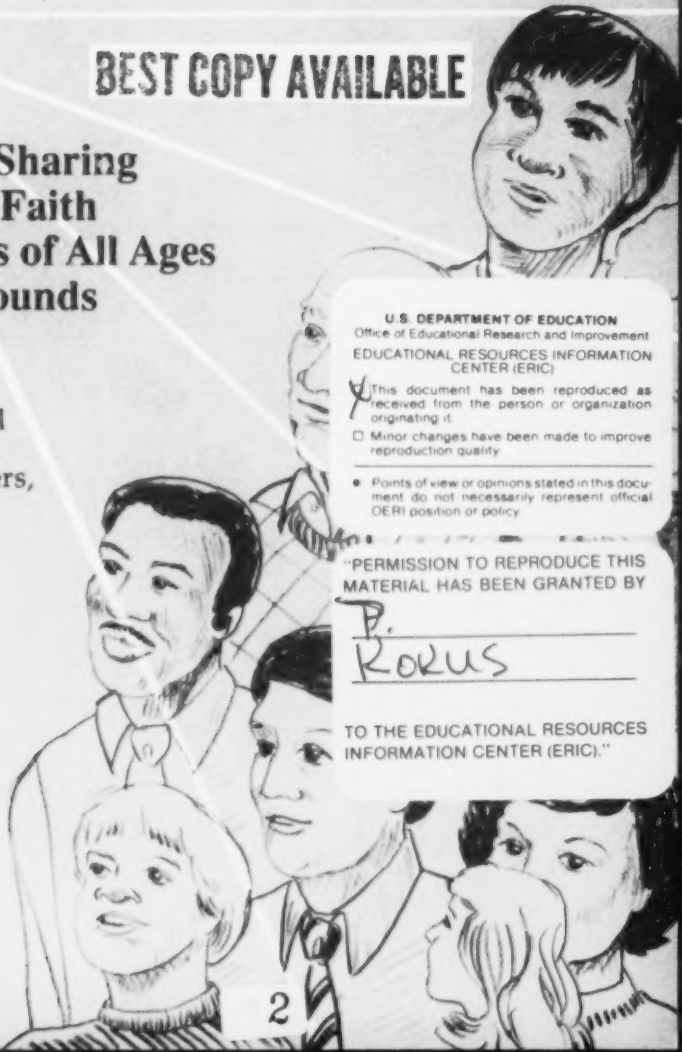
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National Conference of Directors
of Religious Education
(NCDRE/CACE)

National Catholic Educational Association

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Dear Friends:

As we approach the year 2000, we share a great concern to teach as Jesus did and to hand on the faith in the complex, gifted, challenging, multi-cultural society that is the United States of America. Perhaps there has been no time in the history of the Catholic Church in this country that has had greater need of faith-filled, committed, professionally prepared diocesan directors of religious education who closely collaborate with their bishops in providing catechesis of the highest quality for every member of the Church from the very young to the elderly.

This survey and publication on the role of the diocesan director has been a goal of NCEA's Conference of Directors of Religious Education (NCDRE/CACE) for two years. It contains very significant information, here-to-fore unavailable about the special ministry of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education and the persons currently holding this position. It also contains helpful sample job description and qualification requirements for this position.

Special thanks is extended to Jean Marie Weber, President of the National Conference of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education (NCDD), and all of the members of NCDRE and NCDD who cooperated in this project. It was truly a collaborative effort of all diocesan directors.

The information in this publication challenges diocesan leadership to look to the future in order to plan for the education and compensation of future diocesan catechetical leaders. It is hoped that this profile will be a helpful resource for every bishop and diocesan director who share a common concern for understanding, supporting and strengthening the role of the Diocesan Director of Religious education.

May we continue to make every effort to stir into flame the gift of faith with which we have been blessed; and may we make every effort to share this faith with Catholics of all ages.

Sincerely,

Joan Curtin, C.N.D.

Sister Joan Curtin, CND

President

National Conference of Directors of Religious Education (NCEA)

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PART ONE

A National Profile of Diocesan Directors:

Background, Salaries, Responsibilities

In December 1987 the executive committee of the National Conference of Directors of Religious Education (NCDRE) of the National Catholic Educational Association outlined four goals as priorities for the organization. One of these goals focused on researching and designing professional standards for Diocesan Directors including requirements, salaries and benefits. The executive committee approved a related strategy of collecting current data regarding diocesan directors. In the summer of 1988 a preliminary survey was sent to the membership of NCDRE. 44 responses were received.

At the 1988 Chief Administrators of Catholic Education meeting in Toronto, NCDRE members reviewed the results of this preliminary survey and formed a goal committee which proposed two strategies 1) to design, collate and publish a national profile of current diocesan directors of religious education and 2) to create a model job description for a diocesan director with a list of job requirements and appropriate salary and benefit recommendations.

To develop the profile, NCDRE contracted the services of Dr. Thomas Walters and Rita Tyson Walters to design an instrument based on the suggestions of NCDRE executive committee members and a related goal committee of the National Conference of Diocesan Directors (NCDD). This profile is a result of a cooperative effort of both diocesan directors' organizations. In the spring of 1989 the profile was mailed to one-hundred and seventy-six diocesan directors of religious education and eight military persons with a cover letter signed by both Presidents of NCDRE and NCDD Sr. Joan Curtin, CND, of the Archdiocese of New York and Ms. Jean Marie Weber of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. There was a 72% return rate. It is hoped that the findings reported here will provide a source of reflection for understanding and developing the position of diocesan director of religious education in the United States.

Joseph P. Sinwell

Joseph P. Sinwell

Survey Results on Diocesan Directors

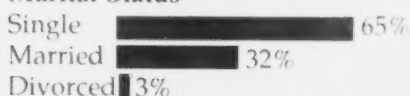
The following are the results of a questionnaire which was mailed to 176 diocesan offices of religious education in the spring of 1989. In addition, 8 questionnaires were mailed to persons responsible for religious education in the military. 132 questionnaires were returned. This represents a 72% return rate.

Under the direction of Dr. Thomas P. Walters, St. Meinrad School of Theology, the questionnaire was designed by members of the National Conference of Directors of Religious Education (NCDRE), National Conference of Diocesan Directors (NCDD) and representatives of the National Catholic Educational Association. The results are generally presented in the same order that was used in asking the questions on the survey. Comments are included where necessary.

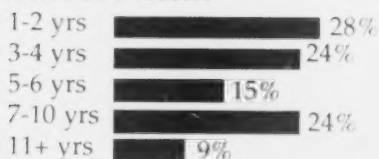
Sex



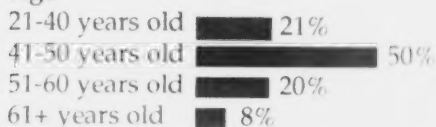
Marital Status



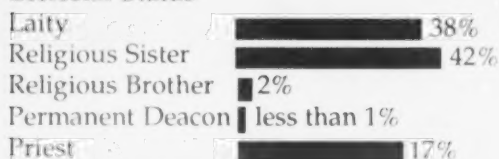
Years as Director



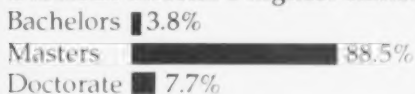
Age



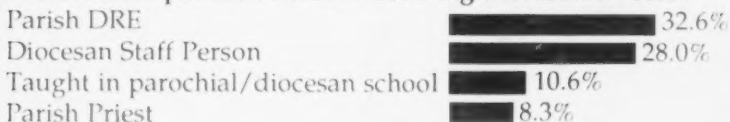
Ecclesial Status



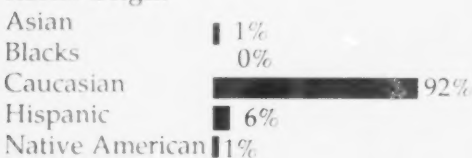
Diocesan director's highest earned degree



Professional position before becoming diocesan director



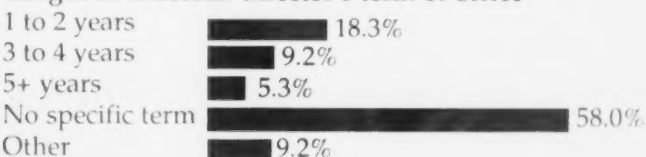
Racial Origin



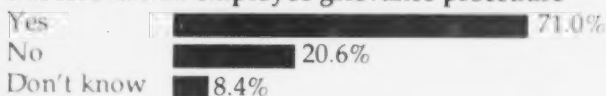
Diocesan director has a written contract



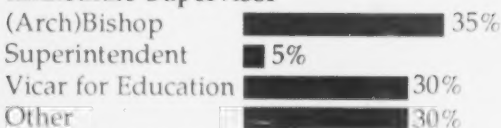
Length of diocesan director's term of office



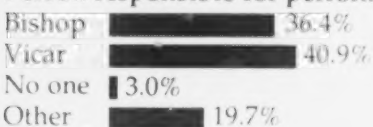
Diocese has an employee grievance procedure



Immediate Supervisor



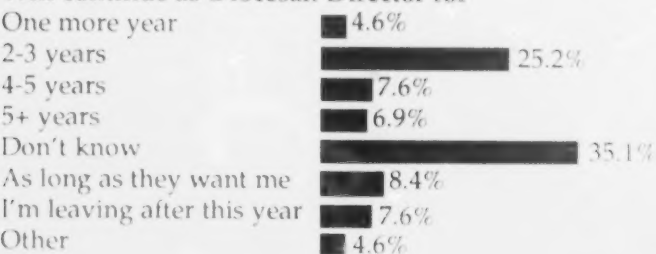
Person responsible for performance evaluation



Agreed upon process for evaluating the diocesan directors' performance



Will continue as Diocesan Director for



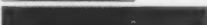
Religious Education office part of a larger diocesan department

Yes  51.9%

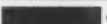
No  48.1%

Budget ranges for diocesan office of religious education

Less than 50,000  15.4%

50,000-100,000  23.1%

100,001-200,000  35.4%

200,001-300,000  9.2%

300,001-400,000  10.0%

400,001-500,000  3.1%

500,001-600,000  0.8%

600,001+  3.1%

Budget part of larger department budget

Yes  35.9%

No  64.1%

Adequacy for funding for the diocesan office

More than adequate  1.5%

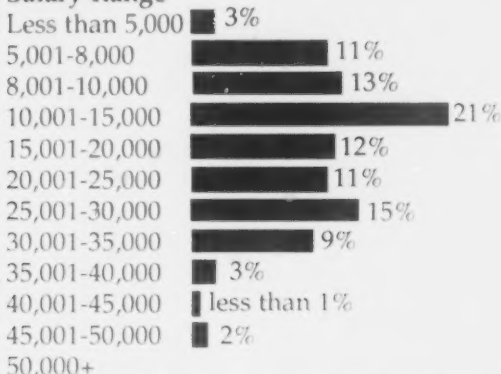
Adequate  49.6%

Less than adequate  45.0%

Not at all adequate  3.8%

Salary and Benefits

Salary Range



A crosstabulation on salaries and ecclesial status indicates that 78% of the salaries of permanent deacons and priests are at or below \$10,000. Whereas, only 28% of religious sisters' and brothers' salaries and none of the lay salaries are in this range. 61% of the salaries of diocesan directors who belong to religious orders fall in the \$10,001-\$20,000 range. 63% of the lay salaries are in the \$25,000-\$30,000 range. Only 14% of the diocesan directors in this sample make more than \$30,000. All but one of the diocesan directors who make \$30,000+ are lay persons. The majority of diocesan directors in each category—laity (55%), religious sisters and brothers (54%), and permanent deacons and priests (61%)—are 'somewhat dissatisfied' or 'totally dissatisfied' with their current salary.

Benefits received from Diocese

Annual benefits differ for laity, members of religious orders, and permanent deacons and priests. Benefits received by 50% or more of the members in these groups are presented.

Laity

Paid vacation	94%
Funds for Workshops/Conferences	94%
Retirement Fund	90%
Mileage and Gas Allowance	90%
Social Security	86%
Paid Professional Memberships	86%
Health Plan for Self	69%
Workers Compensation	67%
Group Life Insurance	55%

Religious Sisters and Brothers

Funds for Workshops/Conferences	91%
Paid Professional Memberships	81%
Health Plan for Self	79%
Paid Vacation	77%
Mileage and Gas Allowance	75%
Car	75%
Retirement Fund	72%
Housing	58%

Permanent Deacons and Priests

Health Plan for Self	96%
Funds for Workshops/Conferences	91%
Paid Professional Memberships	87%
Paid Vacation	87%
Mileage and Gas Allowance	87%
Retirement Fund	83%
Dental Plan for Self	57%
Continuing Education	52%

Director's Responsibilities

Areas of Responsibility for Diocesan Office

Parish religious education	97.7%
Elementary religious education	97.0%
Catechist formation	96.2%
Junior high religious education	93.2%
Pre-school religious education	93.9%
Curriculum	90.9%
Certification of catechists	90.9%
Secondary religious education	87.9%
Adult religious education	86.4%
Special religious education	68.9%
Certification of religion teachers in schools	65.9%
Multi-cultural catechesis	64.4%
Religious education in schools	61.4%
RCIC	55.3%
RCIA	54.5%
Certification of professionals (e.g. DREs)	54.5%
Other	37.1%
Youth Ministry	32.5%

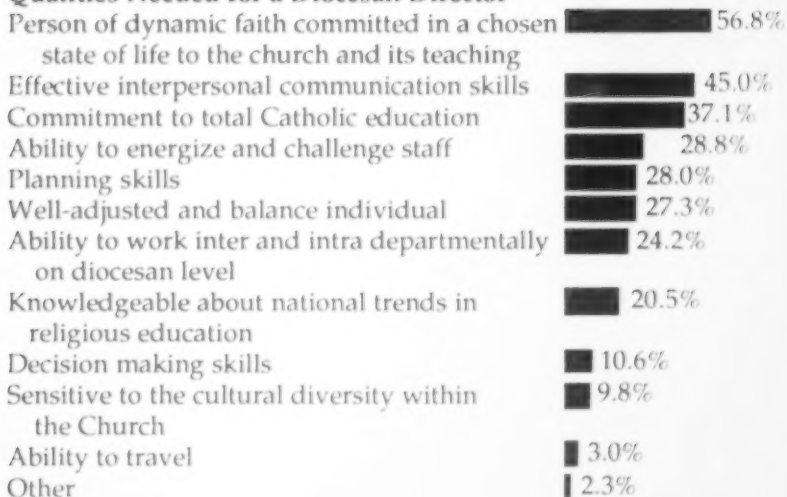
Directors View of Most Essential Responsibilities

Give direction/vision to catechetical ministry	79.5%
Administration and planning	42.4%
Teacher/Catechist training and certification	34.8%
Provide service to D.R.E.	34.1%
Communication within diocese and diocesan departments	23.5%
Support parish and school religious education programs	21.2%
Develop parish leadership	18.9%
Develop adult learning	14.4%
Personnel/Staff management	14.4%
Policy development for religious education	9.1%
Other	3.8%
Implement board of education policies	2.3%
Resource for youth ministry	1.5%
Improve school religion program	.8%
Education about human sexuality	.8%

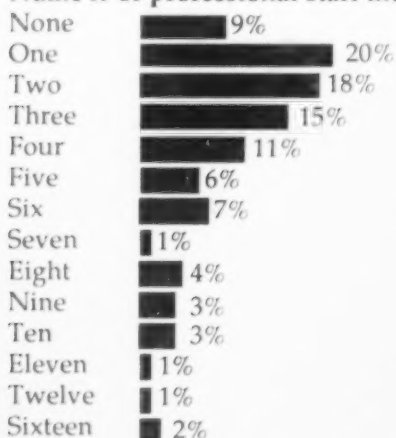
Duties which consume greatest time/energy

Administration and planning		78.8%
Communication within diocese and diocesan departments		36.4%
Teacher/Catechist training and certification		33.3%
Provide services to parish DREs		31.1%
Personnel/Staff management		25.8%
Give direction/vision to catechetical ministry		24.2%
Support parish and school religious education programs		22.0%
Develop parish leadership		14.4%
Develop adult learning		10.6%
Other		6.8%
Policy development for religious education		6.1%
Education about human sexuality		3.8%
Implement board of education policies		1.5%
Improve school religion programs		.8%
Resource for youth ministry		.8%

Qualities Needed for a Diocesan Director



Number of professional staff members



Professional Memberships

93% of directors belong to NCDD; 79% belong to NCEA either individually or through NCDRE/CACE; 20% belong to the Religious Education Association.

Directors' Views On The Most Significant Issue for Parish Religious Education in the 90s

Responses can be categorized into four areas. These four dominant categories of response are listed and some typical comments cited:

- **Developing Leadership Personnel on ALL levels**
 - Development of grass roots catechetical leadership with just wages and benefits.
 - Enabling the adult lay population to realize their own ability to be "church."
 - Adequately trained catechetical leadership.
 - Formation of leadership, especially in areas where we will soon be facing priestless parish.
- **Emphasis on Adult Education**
 - Primacy of adult religious education.
 - Continuing adult religious formation/education.
 - Adult Catholics to appreciate their baptism, and live it, first of all in their families and then in the marketplace.
- **Family or Intergenerational Catechesis**
 - Family based catechesis, including sacramental preparation.
 - The need for new models of parish religious education programs.
 - Intergenerational religious education—a shift from C.C.D.
- **Developing a vision**
 - To give vision and value to total parish religious education.
 - Allow new structures and visions of catechesis to emerge.
 - Rethinking religious educational models.
 - Creating the vision to deal with a variety of ministerial needs while seeing budget and personnel drastically cut.

Directors' Views On The Most Significant Issue For Diocesan Directors in the U.S. in the 90s

Responses can be categorized into four areas. These four dominant categories of response are listed and some typical comments cited:

● Formation of catechists

- Developing qualified catechetical leaders.
- Effective training (formation) of catechists will continue to be the issue for a long time unless we move entirely into a family mode.
- Maintaining a commitment to adequate staffing for catechists at the parish (and diocesan) levels.

● Funding for religious education

- Budget cuts. Lack of personnel. Limited staff doing the job of 3 people. Stress factor.
- Effective use of diminishing resources.
- Making bishops and financial leaders realize that Catholic education is total education and fund religious education programs to the degree schools are funded.

● Formation and placement of DREs

- Continued professionalization of the DRE.
- The issue for directors is to help local DREs see that the 90s will be a time of less priests and more laity needing faith formation.

● Professionalization of the Religious Education Enterprise

- Paid professionals as parish DREs and parish budgets having items for religious education are both essential to effective programs.
- Train good catechists who are willing to teach our Catholic faith as a way of life to youth and adults.
- Qualified and skilled DREs. More certified catechists.
- Religious education as a priority in all parishes with evidence of it in budgeting plans.
- Continual professionalism—training of catechists and advocacy for the ministry of the DRE.

Directors Views on Accomplishments of Past Twenty Years

The responses can be categorized into three dominant areas. These three categories are listed and typical comments cited.

● **Involvement of the Laity**

- Training of strong lay leadership in the religious education field.
- Lay involvement in religious education and adult education.
- Lay involvement and ownership.
- Implementing Vatican II's challenge to relate faith to the lives of people in our world.

● **Expanded understanding of religious education**

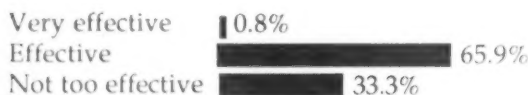
- Experience-based education according to the developmental level of students; a curriculum that focuses on essentials of belief and practice.
- Religion came to life! Genuine interest in religion as a real force in life.
- The development of an understanding of the religious education process which emphasizes formation and not merely information.
- The move from texts and classes influenced by the Baltimore Catechism which encouraged a "good, healthy fear of the Lord" to texts, classes and catechists which encourage our faith as a way of life, not just a subject, and that 'our God is a God of love'.

● **Commitment to life-long learning**

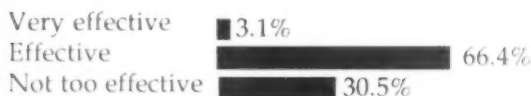
- Helping people to realize God wants a relationship with them.
- This would relate to a growing awareness of social responsibility as well.
- New approaches to the religious education of adults.
- Growing acceptance of parish religious education from 'womb-to-tomb' as the right of every Catholic and the responsibility of every parish.
- A shift from child-centered religious education to adult-centered.
- The shift in attitude that experiences faith formation as a life-long process that also includes teaching concern for social justice issues.

Directors Perceptions on Effectiveness

Effectiveness of parish programs in handing on an UNDERSTANDING of the faith



Effectiveness of parish programs in influencing RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES of participants



Effectiveness of parish programs in influencing participants' RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR



Director's supplementary comments indicated that effectiveness was a difficult area to judge. It varies from parish to parish depending on many factors, e.g. presence of a DRE, priest support, adequate resources, etc. Within a parish program effectiveness will be related to parental and home values and involvement. A precise judgment about effectiveness would require precise charting of patterns of participation over school years, level of home practice of faith etc.

Directors Profile—Executive Summary

Diocesan directors of religious education are predominantly women (56%). Most directors have a graduate degree (96%), are between ages 31-50 (72%) and have served for only 1 to 4 years (52%).

While 62% of directors are clergy or religious, 32% are married laity; 59% earn salaries of under \$20,000. While this position was mostly filled by priests twenty years ago—today only 17% are priests.

The decreasing availability of religious and priests and the generally low salary range indicate that the Church must consider facilitating graduate studies for laity to become involved with this ministry (most religious obtained their degrees at community expense) and work towards salary ranges which are feasible for a married layperson with a family.

Most directors are white caucasians (92%) and there are few minorities represented at this level of diocesan responsibility (6% Hispanic, 1 Native American and no Blacks).

There is a conflict between the directors' view of their office and how they actually spend their time. While 79% believe that giving vision and direction to the total effort is their chief responsibility, they report that they spend 78% of their time in administrative work.

There is some ambiguity about the judgment of the effectiveness of catechetical programs under their direction. Approximately 65% see them as being effective in handing on an understanding of the faith and influencing religious attitudes. This indicates a keen awareness that other factors are very significant in affecting people's faith life: media, public opinion, family values, religious practice, quality of parish life etc.

There appears to be a high "burn-out" rate and turnover in this ministry. Of the directors surveyed 38% indicated that they would not continue beyond three years. Some possible reasons are incongruity of job function and job expectations as noted above, a high frustration level, lack of upward mobility and dissatisfaction with salary and diocesan budget allocations for religious education.

PART TWO

Model Job Description and Qualifications

Introduction

At the 1988 annual meeting of the Chief Administrators of Catholic Education in Toronto, members of the National Conference of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education (NCDRE) formed a committee to study job descriptions, salaries and benefits of a diocesan director of religious education. The members who served on this committee were Sister Marianne Almon, (Archdiocese of St. Louis); Mrs. Ruth Bradly, (Diocese of Orange); Mr. James A. Corr, representative for National Conference of Diocesan Directors of Religious Education (NCDD) (Diocese of Cleveland); Mr. Joseph Kappel, (Diocese of Toledo); Mrs. Ann Osgood, (Archdiocese of Cincinnati); Mr. Joseph P. Sinwell, (Diocese of Providence), Chair; and Rev. John Unger, (Archdiocese of St. Louis).

The action plan was to review over 25 current job descriptions of diocesan directors. The Committee members submitted model descriptions which were critiqued and edited into one. This proposed model would contain these divisions: a statement of the role and accountability, administrative and educational responsibilities and recommended requirements, salary range and benefits. The edited model was again reviewed and a final one formulated. This model presents a generalized description with recommended requirements, salary and benefits of a diocesan director of religious education. A note of gratitude is due to the Committee and others

who critiqued and produced the final version.

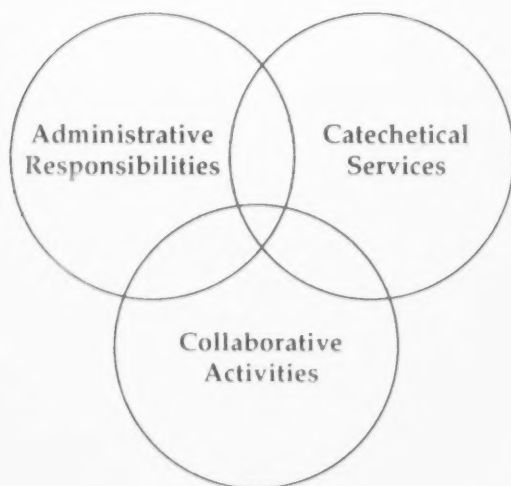
Job Description

Title: Diocesan Director of Religious Education

The diocesan director of religious education is the chief administrator of religious education in the diocese. The director is responsible for the effective coordination, development and evaluation of religious education activities for adults, youth and children. The director is responsible for developing and implementing diocesan policies regarding religious education and the administration of a central diocesan office. The director is responsible for effective advocacy and communication of the catechetical mission to appropriate publics, and for collaboration and resourcing of other diocesan departments as necessary.

Accountability: As a Diocesan Official (GCD #126) the Director is accountable to the bishop of the diocese or his vicar.

The Diocesan Director's Responsibilities



Administrative Responsibilities:

- Develops and implements necessary policies, programs, and resources to fulfill the mission of the office. (NCD #218b)
- Manages the diocesan office and staff effectively.
- Hires, supervises, and evaluates office personnel and provides for professional staff development.
- Prepares the annual office budget and an annual accounting.
- Formulates and evaluates goals and objectives for the office in cooperation with the diocesan planning cycle.
- Maintains all necessary records, files and statistics.
- Coordinates all communications sent in the name of the office.
- Convenes and direct regular meetings of the office staff and other diocesan meetings.
- Appoints special staff committees and task forces as appropriate.
- Maintains observance of diocesan personnel policies.
- Provides information on parishes and religious education to the diocesan bishop and others when appropriate.
- Represents the Office of Religious Education to parishes, schools and the community-at-large.

Catechetical Services:

- Advocates and resources the family and parish as the primary places of religious formation.
- Advocates and resources life-long catechesis throughout the diocese.
- Advocates and resources catechesis and provides leadership training that is sensitive to culture and racial diversity.
- Develops and interprets guidelines for preparation and celebration of sacraments.
- Reviews and recommends religious education curriculum texts, and resources for grades K-12 according to Vatican and *National Catechetical Directory* Guidelines.
- Develops and administers a policy and procedure for catechist/religion teacher training and certification. (NCD #218,11).
- Gathers and communicates regularly with parish and Catholic school catechetical leaders.

- Provides in-service workshops to parishes on specific catechetical topics and issues when needed.
- Develops personnel recruitment, certification and placement system for professional catechetical leaders.
- Develops and implements policies for the formation of parish catechetical leadership.
- Provides opportunities for continuing in-service enrichment for professional catechetical leaders and teachers.
- Is available for assistance in resolution of local concerns regarding programs or personnel in religious education.
- Assists parishes in organization, planning and programming and evaluating for religious education.
- Collects and promotes the use of audio-visuals and other supplementary instructional materials for catechesis.
- Communicates regularly with pastors and other pastoral and educational ministers regarding religious education materials, activities and trends.
- If appropriate to diocese, promotes and assists parishes in training and resourcing parish council education committees and adult education teams.
- If appropriate to diocese, provides resources and training for adult catechesis for all stages of the RCIA.
- If appropriate to diocese, provides resources and training for catechetical needs of developmentally disabled.
- If appropriate to diocese, promotes and resource a total youth ministry program throughout the diocese.

Cooperative/Collaborative Activities:

- Work in close cooperation with the superintendent of schools and other Catholic school personnel toward the quality and effectiveness of catechesis in the schools and the mission of Catholic education in the diocese.
- Maintain knowledge of developments in catechesis in the Church of the United States.
- Maintain membership in NCDD, CACE/NCDRE and regional association of Diocesan Religious Education Directors.
- Maintain close communication and cooperation for programming with appropriate diocesan offices and agencies.
- Report to and resources diocesan consultative and collegial bodies as required.
- Perform other tasks assigned by bishop or vicar (secretary/director of education).

Qualifications for a Diocesan Director:

A. Personal Qualities

- Evidence of dynamic committed Catholic faith.
- Evidence of effective leadership in planning and programming for religious education.
- Sensitivity to cultural and racial diversity within the church.
- Knowledge of adult learning processes and design.
- Familiarity with multiple parish styles and ministries.
- Demonstrated awareness of contemporary catechetical issues and resources.
- Ability to work on the diocesan level.

B. Training

- Masters Degree in Religious Studies or equivalent with recent graduate study in Catholic Theology.
- Evidence of post-graduate training in Education, Administration and Supervision.

C. Experience

- Three years experience in parish religious education.
- Preferably, three years experience on diocesan staff in religious education.

Salary and Benefits:

- Salary range - \$35,000-\$50,000
- 15-20 days vacation
- Convention and continuing in-service benefits
- Individual medical insurance, with provisions for family plans.
- Family dental (perhaps with deductible)
- Cumulative sick days (with cash value at retirement)
- Defined contribution plan or portable pension
- Life and disability insurance
- Unemployment insurance and workers compensation
- Personnel and grievance policy
- Paid holidays
- Mileage or travel reimbursement or allotment



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